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LATEST NEWS



FOR THE SHEFFIELD STAR ON TUESDAY 4 JUNE 2019

Aston, the Eagles director of rugby, has guided his side into top five contenders in 2019 after back-to-back relegation battles, but there have been cracks appearing in recent weeks following defeats to the likes of Halifax, Leigh, Toronto and most recently Widnes.

Eagles are back in action again tomorrow in the 1895 Cup against Challenge Cup semi-finalists Halifax, but Aston can be forgiven for having one eye on Sunday's crucial Championship showdown against Featherstone at the OLP.

The recent slump is the first severe bump in what has been a largely impressive campaign, with Aston now seeking a route back to form ahead of Sunday.

He told The Star: "We are in a bit of a hole now. We are in a rut. We have seen it coming. It isn't something we didn't know could happen. It is backs against the wall, and now we need people who have a bit of steel about them."

The Eagles' cause has been severely dented by losing James Glover and Matty James

through long-term injury, with Aston not only missing two of his top performers, but also vital experience and leadership at a crucial time.

Aston has a clutch of youngsters to call upon to help fill the gaps, but determining when to bring them up to the firing line - and for how long - will be a topic for debate as he plots team selection for the next two games.

He added: "We have lost a couple of characters in the last month or so who are influential in the squad, and we need other people to stand up now. Let's say some of the younger players might be doing that, and some of the others aren't."

"They will be judged by the games, and there are plenty of them coming. It starts Wednesday against Halifax. We were in Sunday, we're in Tuesday, we'll play Wednesday, we're in Friday and we'll play Sunday. Two



big games coming up now, and if we have anything about us we'll need to stand up."

The draw for the 1895 Cup took place on Friday, if the Eagles were successful against Fax, details of the next round fixture will be announced in due course.



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TUBBY TALK

Welcome back to the Olympic Legacy Park for today's crucial fixture with Featherstone.

I am sitting down for these notes prior to the game with Halifax because of printing deadlines, but I am sure it goes without saying this has been a tough couple of weeks with a lot of games in a short space of time.

There is no bigger than today's test against Featherstone, who aren't far away in the table, therefore we know the importance of today's game.

The last two weeks have been a real test of the squad here, especially considering we are now without Matty James and James Glover through injury.

Both are key on and off the field, so we know it will be tough without them, but now is the time for others to stand up and lead the youngsters because we have a talented group here who are a force for any team in this league.

I was really disappointed with what happened at Widnes, and for me it was the second game in a row where we were poor in the opening 40. You cannot afford an off day against any team in this league, but when you play full-time outfits like Toronto and Widnes, there is no going back from a poor half.

That proved to be the case because we were out of both games by the half-time hooter, and whilst we improved against Toronto, it really wasn't good enough at Widnes.

The lads are disappointed and we'll see what kind of reaction we get when we are back in the bread and butter of league action today.



I will be looking for my senior players to help us out of the rut we have found ourselves in. It has been a difficult run, but we haven't got to where we are because we are a bad team.

We expect to have bumps in the road but it is about how quickly you can get yourselves out of it, and that's where the senior players are vital in lifting confidence around the place.

We have lost a couple to injury, but we still have others here who have been around this league, and we'll be looking for them to lead the group back into form.

A warm welcome as always to Featherstone today, and as ever I'd like to thank everyone for the magnificent support over recent weeks.

Enjoy the game.

Tubbs.

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COMMERCIAL CORNER



Good afternoon and welcome back to The OLP and welcome to all the Players, Directors and Fans from Featherstone.

I would also like to welcome today's BIG Match Sponsor DC Builders and Match Ball Sponsors IFM Insurance. David Close is a big supporter of rugby league and has a great history in the game whilst David Biggs and his guests at IFM are a big supporter of The Eagles and this support is very much appreciated.

As always, just looking back to our last Home Game vs Toronto I would like to Thank Andrew Denniff from Barnsley & Rotherham Chamber of Commerce for their sponsorship of the game. Pictures is Andrew presenting our man of the match, Josh Guzdek, with his award.

One area we do struggle commercially is for Match Day sponsorship packages. This could well be down to a number of factors. Obviously the ground is one and as a club we

are working closely with The Scarborough Group on this issue. The other is that we play some games on a Sunday Afternoon which is not ideal timings for business engagement. What I am asking for is your help.

If you know anyone who would like to sponsor a game, please let me know and I will contact them. There is so much more to match sponsorship than just turning up for a metal on the day. We work with the sponsor before and after the game to maximise the exposure and, in turn, the value they get.

Also, coming up with have our quarterly business lunch at Genting Club, this is always a great event with insight from Mark Aston on the club and networking with over 200 people in the room. We do have a couple of spaces left if anyone is interested in attending.

Finally from me, in the next couple of weeks we will commence the auction for the 3rd kit players shirts. This will be auctions of to the end of the season to anyone who wishes to bid for one. As I am sure you are aware we did not produce replicas of this kit so they are very rare. A percentage off the proceeds will also be going to this year's Charity, Start a heart. Keep an eye on Social Media for more information on this.

As always, thank you for your support and Enjoy the game.

Commercial Director - Mark Hannigan



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FROM THE OFFICE



The 1895 Cup game on Wednesday coupled with a quick break to Germany for me has meant this afternoon's programme went to print on Wednesday morning.

This means in today's issue you unfortunately won't see details from Wednesday night's match and the subsequent draw for the next round that took place on Friday morning on BBC Radio Leeds.

Hopefully we were in the hat and are in the draw for the next round. Halifax fielded what was essentially a reserve side on Wednesday night, even calling up some of their junior players. Sadly, after our youth setup was cruelly taken away in years gone by and the perils we have faced since then, we didn't have that luxury.

Speaking with Tubbs early in the week, if we had the opportunity there would be no doubt, he would have played a youthful side like Halifax did as it's a difficult turnaround for sides, especially at this level. I think Fax's first team may still have been celebrating an

emphatic victory in the Challenge Cup.

I only caught the back-end of the match as I was travelling back from Liverpool after watching the Champions League final with a slightly sore head on a crammed train. It's great to see a Championship side and a part-time Championship side at that in the Semi-Finals of the Challenge Cup.

I think the fairy-tale may well end against a buoyant St. Helens but sure it will be a great experience for their supporters but also great exposure for the club and hopefully for them, they can capitalise on it and maximise revenue through ticket sales, shirt sales, sponsorship etc.

The 1895 Cup does allow an easier route for clubs to Wembley and yes it would be fantastic to get there but the way the Cup competition is set out, we will likely lose money if we got there so it's difficult to get too excited about it sadly!

There is a busy period coming up with four back-to-back home games for us between mid-June and mid-July.

We have launched an offer for all four games for £40 for adults and concessions and £4 for juniors so if you are coming to all four games, make sure to take advantage. You can buy through our website, phone the club or visit our office.

On Monday evening over 40 people took park in the first touch rugby league competition at Forge Valley School. It was a great event and over the next seven weeks I'm sure it will grow further.

It's £5 per person, per week and anyone can enter. We had juniors to current players like the Burns Brothers competing. Anyone can enter the social competition so come down, every Monday, 6.45pm.

General Manager - Liam Claffey



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STRENGTH & CONDITIONING

This week we take on Featherstone in our third game in ten days. It sounds like a very similar spell to Easter with the short turn around between games then.

But thankfully, in some ways, this time we have at least had a little more spread rather than two games in four days. Either way though, it's still a tough period.

Now I've talked about lots of different topics in these programme articles, all in relation to S&C and how we prepare our athletes. This time I thought I'd take a different line and not necessarily talk about specifics in quite the same way as before and more my opinion of who we have coming up in Featherstone and just touch on how we've prepped.

We all know that Featherstone are always going to be tough, it's a tough division in general, but we had a disappointing game against them back in Round 6 which didn't match up to our early form.

We meet them this weekend off a mixed few weeks in the Championship with the victory at the Bash (but losing two key players to injury) and then a tough but unrewarded performance against Toronto, followed up by a poor performance against Widnes.

Preparing for this game has been an interesting one with the 1895 Cup fixture on the Wednesday between this game and the last Championship fixture. We've had little opportunity to get the guys in but we did get them in Sunday after Widnes, Tuesday before Halifax and Friday for final prep.

Sunday was a tough session, both mentally and physically as we challenged the guys to kick on from this mid-season slump. We mixed some recovery work into our S&C session in the gym and did a short but intense field session afterwards. The desire is there



with the guys and we're hoping we can show it again by returning to some of our early season form and come away with a win over Featherstone.

The talent is clearly there when we've shown our best rugby, particularly against Toulouse, the second half against Toronto and the nip and tuck game against York.

We just need the lads to find confidence in themselves again and mentally stay stronger, the fact we can physically (fitness and strength wise) stay in contention right to the end shows we just need a bit more mental resilience and start the game how we mean to go on.

The prep work has been done, the weights have been lifted and the kilometres put in the legs on the field. We now just need to show what we can do this weekend.

Player Performance Manager - Simon Vardy



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TODAY'S OPPOSITION

I write this ahead of Featherstone's 1895 Cup clash with Widnes which took place on Wednesday night so we could see a side looking for revenge or an upbeat side, it's difficult to predict!

No doubt Rovers will have faced a stern test against the Vikings, the Eagles suffered probably the worst defeat of the season last week in the rearranged match against the Cheshire side. Mark Aston's side suffered their first defeat of the 2019 season against Featherstone at the LD Nutrition Stadium in difficult conditions and no doubt ex-Rovers like playmaker Anthony Thackeray will be looking to make amends for that defeat in the reverse fixture this afternoon.

Both sides sit level on 18 points however after the 36-6 defeat last week and the large defeat the week prior to the Wolfpack, the Eagles have fell to 6th place whilst today's visitors sit in 4th, nine wins and six defeats each. Featherstone saw several players leave in the off-season like Thackeray and Knowles but other key playmakers such as Wildie to Bradford and some expected them to struggle this season with late recruitment

and players arriving late into pre-season such as their Papua New Guinean contingent.

However it seems like some shrewd business by the club to appoint the relatively young Australian coach Ryan Carr who was somewhat of an unknown on these shores but arrived with key knowledge from the game down under.

He has recruited well with the likes of fellow Australians Cameron King and Connor Carey. Both have bypassed the visa systems with different passports from ancestral heritage and so landed quickly and have gelled into the team excellently well. Huge Cook Island forward Makahesi Makatao has also joined a few weeks ago who Carr worked with during his time at New South Wales side Mounties.

With dual-registration with Leeds Rhinos and a number of ex-Rhinos youngsters joining the Rovers ranks, it's a quality outfit and will be a very difficult task for Mark Aston and his troops on the wide 3g pitch here at the OLP this afternoon.



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THREE TO WATCH

Dane Chisholm

Chisholm had a brief and ill-fated time at Sheffield back in early 2017 and subsequently joined John Kear's Bradford. He headed to Rovers prior to the Easter fixtures this year on loan and has recently joined them on a permanent deal.

The playmaker has certainly improved Rovers in attack giving them more options as they go forward. He will certainly be a threat and will no doubt look to put in a fine performance against his old club this afternoon. Certainly one to watch.



Cameron King

Hooker King has a great deal of NRL experience and back in November 2018 he took to social media with the aim of securing himself a new club following his release by Parramatta.

Rovers snapped him up and since then he has become somewhat of a poster boy and a fans favourite with the supporters at Post Office Road.

Quick from dummy half, he has great work ethic and has been a real asset for Carr's side and a great coup for the club.



Luke Briscoe

On dual-registration from Leeds Rhinos, Briscoe has made a fine impact in the Championship.

Brother of Tom, also at the Rhinos, in some quarters some say he is better than his sibling and he has certainly has the same attributes.

Quick pace & a strong winger with just over 50 appearances for the Rovers during a number of spells, he is nearly scoring at a rate of a try per game.

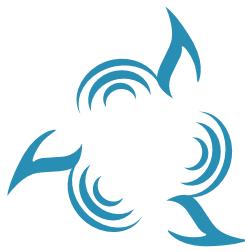
A constant threat down the edges, no doubt he will look to add to his try scoring tally on the wide, fast OLP pitch this afternoon.



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Pat
Walker

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PATCH WALKER

DF: Pat, we come into today's game after losing to Widnes in the league. How disappointed were the lads coming away from that one?

PW: We were very disappointed as we were confident we could come away with a win. But to come away with a heavy loss was really disappointing.

DF: We have had a good campaign so far but how important is it that we don't let that good work slip away towards the end?

PW: I think we have got a bit complacent and maybe gone into matches thinking we're going to win instead of knuckling down. It has hit home recently with some of the results we have had.

DF: Obviously having the two injuries to Matt James and James Glover hasn't helped matters recently. How much spirit is in the camp to try and make it a special year, and especially for those two on the sidelines?

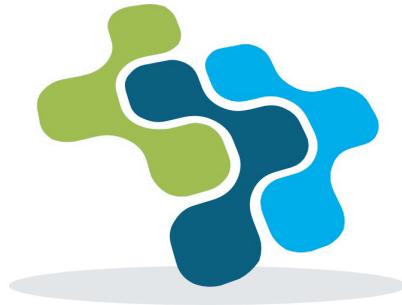


PW: All the players are chomping at the bit as we all want to win and we enjoy playing alongside each other. We have had a few chats with each other and trying to get everyone prepped for these games coming up.

DF: Today we face Featherstone who have been going well recently. These are the sort of big games that we need to be getting something out of aren't they?

PW: They have been going really well and it's another massive test for us. It's another game we want to get something out of and we will be putting everything into it.





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PATCH WALKER

DF: With a fast surface at the OLP and expansive players on both sides, I'm sure it'll be a good game for the neutral as well as both sets of fans?

PW: It should be an exciting game as both teams can attack really well. It'll probably come down to who can defend the best and it's something we've been working on as we have been leaking far too many points. Fingers crossed our defence can come out on top.

DF: We didn't have the best of times against the Rovers earlier on in the season. How much have we learnt from that game, going into this one?

PW: Since that game we have had a few lessons where we have been caught off guard against teams. It's frustrating at times as we know we can be a lot better than what we have been putting up.

DF: Making the OLP a fortress is something that we definitely need to be doing. Getting a win in this game would certainly be a good start to that?

PW: It's looking like Fev will be one of the top sides so if we can get a win against them, it'll put a marker down for the rest of the season.

Pat Walker was speaking to Dan Fowler.





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GETTING TO KNOW

Tightest Player?

Will go with JD. Never brings shower gel or deodorant, always catching off the lads in the changing rooms!

Rugby League Idol?

I was a massive Bradford fan so Robbie Paul especially but both the Paul brothers really!

Best RL Moment?

Probably winning Grand Final with the Eagles back in 2013!

Come Dine with Me – Meal you'd make & three guests?

I'd invite Adam Sandler, Will Ferrell & Graham Norton - bit of a comedy night! I'd make homemade bruschetta for starters, chicken and cheese wrapped in parma ham with sweet potato wedges & veg. For dessert I'd go with chocolate fudge cake & ice cream.

Snapchat or Instagram?

Instagram



Pat Walker

Number: 6
Position: Stand Off
Height: 6ft 0'
Weight: 96kg
Twitter: @patchwalker13

Funniest Player?

Blacky (Ben Blackmore) but Crookes comes out with some belters!

Favourite Latest Film?

A Star is Born!

Worst Dressed?

I'd go with Oliver Davies, he comes in with some terrible footwear mainly!

Best Trainer?

Greg Burns is always in and amongst, always at the front in fitness and always trying to better himself.

Best Ground Played At?

Keepmoat - always enjoyed it there!



@SHEFFIELDDEAGLESRL



SHEFFIELDDEAGLES

TODAY'S TEAMS



SHEFFIELD EAGLES

	T	G	DG
1. <i>Josh Guzdek</i>	●	●	●
2. <i>Ryan Millar</i>	●	●	●
4. <i>Jason Crookes</i>	●	●	●
5. <i>Ben Blackmore</i>	●	●	●
6. <i>Pat Walker</i>	●	●	●
7. <i>Anthony Thackeray</i>	●	●	●
8. <i>Pat Moran</i>	●	●	●
9. <i>James Davey</i>	●	●	●
10. <i>Matt James</i>	●	●	●
11. <i>Brad Knowles</i>	●	●	●
12. <i>Joel Farrell</i>	●	●	●
13. <i>Aaron Brown</i>	●	●	●
14. <i>Greg Burns</i>	●	●	●
15. <i>Oliver Davies</i>	●	●	●
16. <i>Corey Makelim</i>	●	●	●
17. <i>Shaun Pick</i>	●	●	●
18. <i>James Glover</i>	●	●	●
19. <i>Sonny Esselmont</i>	●	●	●
21. <i>Blake Broadbent</i>	●	●	●
22. <i>Paddy Burns</i>	●	●	●
23. <i>Rory Dixon</i>	●	●	●
25. <i>Lewis Taylor</i>	●	●	●
26. <i>Joslin Landu</i>	●	●	●
29. <i>Ben Hellewell</i>	●	●	●
31. <i>Nathan Mason</i>	●	●	●

Referee: *B. Pearson*
Touch Judges: *S. Race & C. Astbury*

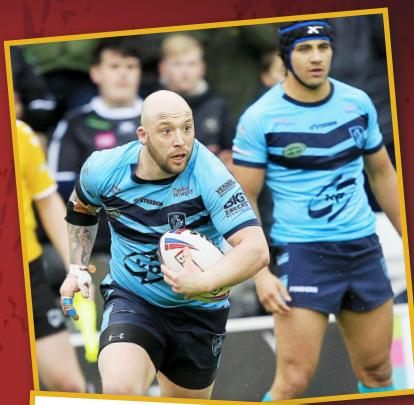
FEATHERSTONE ROVERS

T G DG

●	●	●	1. <i>Calum Turner</i>
●	●	●	2. <i>Luke Briscoe</i>
●	●	●	3. <i>Thompson Teteh</i>
●	●	●	4. <i>Josh Hardcastle</i>
●	●	●	5. <i>Conor Carey</i>
●	●	●	7. <i>Watson Boas</i>
●	●	●	8. <i>Scott Wheeldon</i>
●	●	●	9. <i>Cameron King</i>
●	●	●	10. <i>Jack Bussey</i>
●	●	●	12. <i>Brad Day</i>
●	●	●	13. <i>James Lockwood</i>
●	●	●	14. <i>John Davies</i>
●	●	●	15. <i>Luke Cooper</i>
●	●	●	16. <i>Danny Maskill</i>
●	●	●	17. <i>James Harrison</i>
●	●	●	18. <i>Spencer Darley</i>
●	●	●	19. <i>Jimmy Beckett</i>
●	●	●	20. <i>Kiedan Hartley</i>
●	●	●	21. <i>Morgan Punchard</i>
●	●	●	24. <i>Jimmy McDaniel</i>
●	●	●	25. <i>Jack Render</i>
●	●	●	28. <i>Josh Walters</i>
●	●	●	29. <i>Jack Ormondroyd</i>
●	●	●	<i>Makahesi Makatoa</i>
●	●	●	<i>Dane Chisholm</i>

Match Commissioner: K. Leyland

Time Keeper: C. Morris



TORONTO WOLFPACK

24/05/19

The big-spending league leaders extended their winning run to nine games and increased their lead at the Championship summit, despite a good second-half showing from Mark Aston's side.

The inclusion of dual-registration trio Dan Hindmarsh, Jacob Ogden and Ben Hellewell, plus the return from injury of Jason Crookes, helped compensate for the loss of injured pair James Glover and Matty James, but the hosts were heavy underdogs going into the contest.

The Eagles rebuffed a confident opening burst from the visitors but after six minutes Blake Wallace touched down before converting his own score.

The Wolfpack certainly looked in the mood with no repeat of the early resistance Aston's side showed in the reverse fixture a month ago, as the tries started to rain in. Andrew Dixon bagged a quick-fire converted brace as the Wolfpack moved into a commanding position.

The Eagles weren't given a chance to threaten in the opening quarter, but on their rare forays towards the Toronto line, mistakes were proving costly. After winning back-to-back penalties, the hosts looked in prime position for a try, but Pat Walker coughed up possession when well placed to threaten.

Toronto showed more clinical finishing through tries from Liam Kay and Chase Stanley as the visitors threatened a big score.

Aston's side kept plugging away and were



rewarded just before the half-time hooter. Blake Broadbent was held just short, but the hosts switched the play to allow Hellewell to power over for a try. Walker missed the extras.

The Wolfpack increased their lead after the break through tries from Ricky Leutele and Nick Rawsthorne, but the Eagles hit-back with their second try on 56 minutes. After Hellewell almost scrambled over, the hosts found a gap with Anthony Thackeray's inside pass taken on by Josh Guzdek who crashed over the line. Walker converted.

Aston's side were giving an impressive account of themselves in the second stanza, but were powerless to stop Andy Ackers who powered over for a converted try.

It was the hosts who finished in the ascendancy though as Ryan Millar was denied just short after chasing his own kick. Aston's side had the last word with Brad Knowles going over after some fine build-up, and Walker converted to add respectability.

MATCH REPORT

**SHEFFIELD
EAGLES**

16-42

**TORONTO
WOLFPACK**

- 1. *Josh Guzdek*
- 2. *Ryan Millar*
- 27. *Jacob Ogden*
- 29. *Ben Hellewell*
- 5. *Ben Blackmore*
- 6. *Patch Walker*
- 7. *Anthony Thackeray*
- 8. *Patrick Moran*
- 9. *James Davey*
- 11. *Bradley Knowles*
- 12. *Joel Farrell*
- 15. *Oliver Davies*
- 13. *Aaron Brown*



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**ATTENDANCE
932**

INTERCHANGE

- 31. *Nathan Mason*
- 16. *Corey Makelim*
- 19. *Sonny Esslemont*
- 11. *Brad Knowles*



INTERCHANGE

- 24. *Nick Rawsthorne*
- 10. *Ashton Sims*
- 21. *Anthony Mullally*
- 16. *Tom Obinson*

WIDNES VIKINGS

31/05/19

It was a night to forget for Mark Aston's side who were second-best for long periods of the game, as the hosts enjoyed a comfortable win under the lights.

With an opportunity to move back into third position, the Eagles missed a chance to cash in on their game in hand, and are now nervously looking over their shoulder with their place in the top five under threat.

The tone was set early on with the Eagles caught completely cold in the opening stages as Widnes dominated proceedings from the first minute.

After just three minutes the hosts ran in the first of five first-half tries when Joe Lyons' weighted grubber kick was collected by Hep Cahill who crossed, and ex-Eagle Jack Owens converted.

Aston's side didn't help themselves with several handling errors, but showed some defensive fortitude to survive multiple sets on their own line, with Aaron Brown collecting Josh Ganson's grubber to stave off another wave of pressure.

The stay of execution didn't last long as more errors gave Widnes prime position, with Owens' pass eventually seeing Jayden Hatton over for a try.

After previously turning provider it was Owens who crossed next after collecting Danny Craven's grubber for a converted score. The Eagles barely threatened, with Pat Moran's drop under no pressure 20 metres out summing up their opening stanza.

The one-way traffic continued before the hooter with Chris Dean's converted try from another Lyons grubber, and just before the break a wonderful long pass by Owens gave Ryan Ince a try in the corner.

It was more of the same at the start of the second stanza as dangerous tackles from



Anthony Thackeray and Jason Crookes gave the hosts back-to-back penalties, which ended with Keanan Brand rounding Josh Guzdek for another try.

Brand bagged another converted try soon after, before the Eagles managed to stem the tide in the final quarter.

Aston's side were on the board 12 minutes from time when Ben Blackmore bagged a consolation score, beating Ince one-on-one, after a clever switch from Thackeray, and Pat Walker added the extras.



MATCH REPORT

WIDNES
VIKINGS

36-6

SHEFFIELD
EAGLES

- 5. Jack Owens
- 29. Jayden Hatton
- 12. Chris Dean
- 24. Keanan Brand
- 2. Ryan Ince
- 6. Danny Craven
- 21. Joe Lyons
- 13. Hep Cahill
- 34. Josh Ganson
- 8. Jay Chapelhow
- 11. Harrison Hansen
- 17. Sam Wilde
- 15. Jordan Johnstone

INTERCHANGE

- 18. Ted Chapelhow
- 26. Dan Norman
- 19. Brad Walker
- 16. MacGraff LeuLuai



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ATTENDANCE
4,920

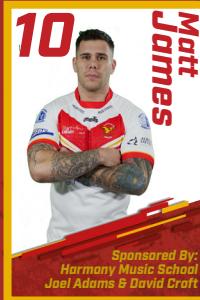


- 1. Josh Guzdek
- 2. Ryan Millar
- 27. Jacob Ogden
- 29. Ben Hellewell
- 5. Ben Blackmore
- 6. Patch Walker
- 7. Anthony Thackeray
- 8. Patrick Moran
- 9. James Davey
- 31. Nathan Mason
- 15. Oliver Davies
- 12. Joel Farrell
- 13. Aaron Brown

INTERCHANGE

- 4. Jason Crookes
- 21. Blake Broadbent
- 16. Corey Makelim
- 17. Shaun Pick

PLAYER PROFILES





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VIEW FROM THE PARK



After a tough loss to Widnes Vikings last time out in the league, the Eagles return to home turf in desperate need of a victory to re-ignite their hopes of a top five finish.

However, the challenge at hand is going to be as stern as they come with Featherstone Rovers making their way over to South Yorkshire whilst in good form.

The likes of Cameron King and Dane Chisholm have been firing on all cylinders while outside backs such as Luke Briscoe and Conor Carey are two of the most dangerous in the competition. If the Eagles are to get anything out of today's clash, they will need to show a drastic improvement to what they put up against the Vikings last Friday.

It was always going to be an uphill battle following the injuries to key men Matt James and James Glover, both being integral figures in the pack and outside backs respectively. As they are both out for the season, Mark Aston has said he will be looking towards London Broncos for their contribution in the dual-registration partnership.

And in all fairness, players such as James Meadows, Ben Hellewell, Jacob Ogden and Nathan Mason have not let us down on any occasion and they do bring a lot of talent to the squad. Whether or not the Broncos effect, along with our thin squad, will be enough to keep us in the top five remains to be seen but it has been a fantastic campaign so far and the players won't be wanting to let the earlier good work go to waste.

As for today's visitors, the Rovers, they have shown great improvement under the stewardship of Ryan Carr. A lot of credit has to go to the Aussie, who arrived just days before the new season started and had to rebuild a team who will have been reeling from the loss of a key figures such as Martyn Ridyard.

Featherstone's dual-registration agreement with Super League strugglers Leeds Rhinos has also come in handy. Although most are annoyed by the dual-registration system, including Eagles boss Aston himself, it is there to be used and the Rovers have made a success of it with the likes of Alex Sutcliffe and Harry Newman featuring for the West Yorkshire club.

They have had experience in the form of Brad Singleton for a week but all in all, they have used younger players who have not been getting a game for the Rhinos. This is what the dual-reg agreement was made for and fair play to the Rovers for using it in the way it was intended.

This is being written a day before the Eagles' 1895 Cup clash against Halifax so fingers crossed we'll be a game closer to Wembley by the time you're reading this. If we are not, then not to worry but we will have to get back winning ways sooner rather than later.

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CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN

Two weeks ago I was on a 'Mental Health' training day looking at how we can encourage each other to make the most of today and stop spending so much time looking back or forward so missing the importance and enjoyment of the now.

According to the course Trainer most people's anxiety, depression or stress can be connected to them worrying about the past or the future.

Mother Teresa said: "Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin."

An easy thing to say but not so easy to do. I know myself how easy it is to fall into a downward spiral, either worrying about the past and wishing things could have been different or worrying about the future. Both hinder us from fully enjoying the now.

I also have to remember that others around are probably also like me. As a friend once said to me 'everyone has a story, and until you hear that story you can't make assumptions about them.'

We need to create an environment where people feel safe to be themselves, able to share their concerns in a non-judgmental environment.

This will help us all to enjoy the moment rather than focusing on the past or worrying about the future.

As Steve Maraboli says: "No matter what your history has been, your destiny is what you create today. What are you going to create?"

Let's keep reminding ourselves and others that every new day is another chance.

Martin Luther King Jr said: "The time is always right to do the right thing." What could be the right thing for you?

Enjoy the game

Club Chaplain - Baz Gacoyne

Baz is a Director of Sheffield Sports Chaplaincy and a guest lecturer for Cliff College's MA Programme in Sports Chaplaincy. He is the club chaplain for Sheffield Wednesday and Sheffield Eagles.

He runs South Yorkshire Chaplaincy & Listening Service along with his wife Linda and works with a number of workplaces & people across the South Yorkshire Region, providing work place visits, bespoke listening services and tailor made support for employees.





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GARETH WALKER

Few players in rugby league can have experienced the varying levels of the sport that Halifax's Challenge Cup hero James Woodburn-Hall has.

The Isleworth-born utility player helped book Fax's place in this year's semi-finals with his superb late winning try against Bradford Bulls on Sunday.

But his journey to that point has been an unusual one to say the least.

A London Broncos junior, Woodburn-Hall made his first team debut for the capital club in 2013, going onto play 13 Super League matches there.

Having featured briefly on loan at London Skolars, he moved north to start university in Leeds in 2015, and the following year was signed by Halifax to initially play in their reserve team.

The 24 year old impressed coach Richard Marshall enough to earn a permanent deal at the club, while at the same time continuing to play for the University of Leeds, winning the University Rugby League Player of the Year award and representing England at that level.

Last season he was a member of the Jamaican squad that made history by qualifying for the 2021 World Cup, and even this year's path has not been a straight forward one.

The week before his Bradford heroics Woodburn-Hall was on dual registration at Hunslet, before being recalled to the Fax squad and then chosen on the bench with Ben Kaye unavailable due to getting married last weekend.

Fax coach Simon Grix explained after the game: "Woody would certainly have come into the 19 even if we'd had Benny Kaye, but I'm not saying he would definitely have played.



"He went to Hunslet last week and did what I asked him to do.

"He's a bit hot and cold sometimes - I want him like he was today, when he's hot, all the time but he's got to develop that consistency.

"Woody came on at 13 and got his nose through the line a couple of times and we're really pleased with what he's done. I wanted him to run the ball, that's his strength along with that ability to play just about anywhere."

Woodburn-Hall also attended the post match press conference to reflect on what was, even by his eclectic career's standards, a remarkable eight days.

He said: "Having been at Hunslet last week it was a massive step up. I was buzzing to be in the squad, because Simon didn't have to pick me this week.

"But he's been honest from the start and said that if you're playing well, you'll get your chance.

"I got my chance and hopefully I made the most of it."

He certainly did - and expect him to write a few more chapters of note as his career continues to unfold.

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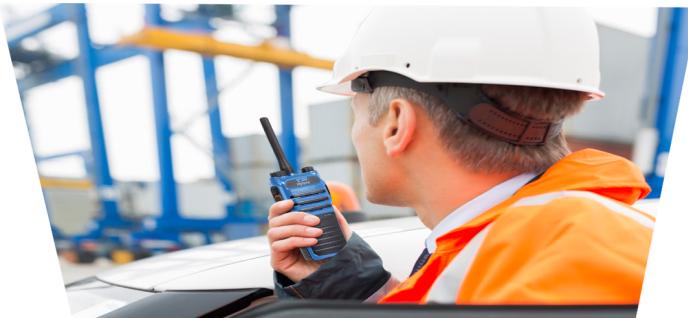
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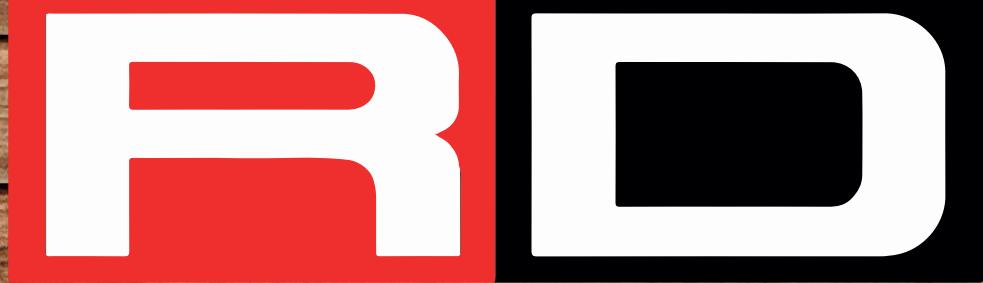


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